

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

S E C R E T STATE 013910

NODIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT JIDDA 417 ACTION SECTATE 20 JAN 76

QUOTE

S E C R E T JIDDA 0417

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, MARR, SA, EG, US

SUBJECT: TRAINING OF EGYPTIANS IN SAUDI F-5 PROGRAM

REF STATE 13811

1. WE ARE REITERATING INSTRUCTIONS TO CHUSMTM THAT THERE WILL BE NO REPEAT NO US PARTICIPATION OF ANY KIND, DIRECT OR INDIRECT, EITHER BY USAF OR NORTHROP CONTRACT PERSONNEL IN TRAINING OF EGYPTIAN PERSONNEL.

2. IN SPITE OF THE OBVIOUS URGENCY OF THIS MATTER, WE DO NOT THINK THAT WE SHOULD RAISE THE MATTER AGAIN WITH PRINCE SULTAN UNTIL ALL EFFORTS HAVE BEEN EXHAUSTED WITH THE EGYPTIANS TO TERMINATE THE PROGRAM. PRINCE SULTAN UNDERSTOOD THE ARGUMENTS PUT FORWARD BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON FOR STOPPING THE TRAINING BUT WAS FIRM IN HIS

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POSITION THAT IF THE PROGRAM IS TO BE ENDED IT MUST BE DONE

BY THE GOE. HE CLEARLY DOES NOT WISH TO BEAR THE ONUS FOR TERMINATION IN CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE THE EGYPTIAN PILOTS AND TECHNICIANS RETURNING TO EGYPT WOULD SAY THAT THEIR TRAINING WAS CUT SHORT BECAUSE OF SAUDI ARABIAN KNUCKLING UNDER TO THE AMERICANS. AT THE SAME TIME, WE BELIEVE THAT HE WILL RESPOND QUICKLY TO AN EGYPTIAN INITIATIVE OR SUGGESTION THAT THE TRAINING BE CUT SHORT.

3. ASIDE FROM THE FOREGOING, A PRACTICAL DIFFICULTY IN OUR RAISING THE MATTER IS THE UNAVAILABILITY OF PRINCE SULTAN. HE IS OFF WITH THE KING IN THE DESERT ON AN INSPECTION/HUNTING TRIP AND IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO ARRANGE A MEETING IN THE NEAR FUTURE. VICE MINDEF PRINCE TURKI IS UNLIKELY TO GIVE INSTRUCTIONS TO END THE PROGRAM WITHOUT CLEARANCE FROM SULTAN WHICH WOULD PROBABLY TAKE SOME TIME. IF IN SPITE OF THE FOREGOING THE DEPT BELIEVES THAT WE MUST RAISE THIS MATTER WITH THE SAG WE WOULD PROPOSE TO DO IT THROUGH FONMIN PRINCE SAUD UPON HIS RETURN FROM GERMANY ABOUT JAN 25. PRINCE SAUD WILL ALSO APPRECIATE THE POLITICAL PITFALLS IN CONTINUING THE PROGRAM AND, THOUGH PRINCE SULTAN MIGHT NOT APPRECIATE OUR BRINGING THE FOREIGN MINISTER INTO THIS MATTER, WE BELIEVE THAT SAUD CAN GET US A RESPONSE OF SOME SORT IN FAIRLY SHORT ORDER.

4. AS A TACTICAL MATTER IN APPROACHING THE EGYPTIANS, IT OCCURS TO US THAT WE MIGHT SUGGEST TO PRESIDENT SADAT THAT HE END THE PROGRAM ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE BASIC OBJECTIVES OF THE TRAINING HAVE BEEN COMPLETED IN THAT EGYPTIAN PILOTS HAVE FAMILIARIZED THEMSELVES WITH THE F-5 AND THAT THERE IS NOTHING TO BE GAINED BY CONTINUING TO DIVERT SKILLED PILOTS AND TECHNICIANS FROM THEIR DUTIES UNTIL A PROGRAM OF US ASSISTANCE BECOMES IMMINENT. HE COULD IN EFFECT SAY THAT THE EGYPTIANS DIDN'T REQUIRE ALL THE TIME THE SAUDIS HAD PROGRAMMED FOR THEM IN ORDER TO COMPLETE THEIR ASSIGNMENTS. CERTAINLY TRANSPARENT BUT IF, AS WE SUSPECT, FACE IS INVOLVED IT MIGHT HELP US OUT OF OUR DILEMMA.

5. SUGGEST THE DEPT PASS THIS MESSAGE TO EMBASSY CAIRO.

PORTER

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